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from a group consisting of a left most portion and a right most portion..." Applicants note that the Examiner has kindly pointed out that there is direct support in the specification for these terms. Accordingly, in view of this amendment, Applicants submit that the rejection has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 8, 15 and 16 were rejected to under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In particular, the Examiner stated that "The limitation of "the regular expression is selected from a group consisting of " ... is not disclosed in the specification. Applicants note that the step of selecting is not what is being claimed, but rather point out to the Examiner that Applicant is using the well known format of a Markush type claim, described as permissible in MPEP §803.2. Accordingly, because the language is standard and accepted claim drafting terminology, Applicants submit that this rejection is improper and should be withdrawn.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Chintakrindi et al. (U.S. Patent 6,216,519). Claims 2 and 3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Chintakrindi et al in view of Ankney et al (U.S. 5,113,499). Claims 4, 5, 7-12, 13-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Chintakrindi in view of Beser (6,189,102) in further view of Belser et al (U.S. 6,151,324). Claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Chintakrindi in view of Peacock (6,381,650). Claim

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12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Chintakrindi in view of Belser in further view of Peacock.

References do not teach, describe or suggest limitations of the claimed invention

In an effort to reach allowance on this case, Applicants have amended all independent claims in a manner similar to that of claim 1 to remove the language of a wildcard character, which is shown in Chintakrindi, but keep the use of 'concatenation' and 'operation' characters as possible values for the regular expression in the claims. No such arrangement as now claimed is shown or suggested in the cited references, either alone or in combination.

For example, Chintakrindi describes writing an IP address into device associated space. No mention is made of the IP address being represented by a 'regular expression' selected from 'concatenation' or 'operation' characters. Beser describes a method and apparatus for storing cable modem network addresses and the customer premise equipment network addresses in a table on a cable modem termination system. At column 35, Beser describes associating a unique identifier with each IP address of the customer premise equipment. However, Beser describes and exemplary IP address at column 35, line 67 as "0ef3454.data-over-cable-net" and thus does not describe using a regular expression in place of the address, wherein the regular expression is selected from a group consisting of concatenation, or operation characters, as recited in the claims.

Ankney is relied upon as teaching X.121 numeric addresses. At column 11, lines 60-61, that addresses are either mnemonic or X.121 numeric. The definition of mnemonic in Ankney is 'user friendly' at col. 11, line 5. Applicant notes that Ankney neither describes nor suggests the limitation of the independent claims of "...encoding the at least one address using a regular

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expression and using the regular expression in place of at least one address, *wherein the regular expression is selected from a group consisting of concatenation characters and operation characters...*"

Belser describes a method and apparatus for connection oriented switching wherein a pre-established path is established between a selected pair of an ingress and egress switch. In one embodiment, the destination address and source address fields of a MAC frame data re replaced with a virtual path which identifies the pre-established path between the ingress and egress switch. The virtual path is defined at column 4 of Belser, lines 40-50, as including "... three portions ... The first portion ... contains the 48-bit MAC address of the egress switch... The second portion 43 contains a 24-bit path identifier ... The third portion 44 contains the lower three bytes ... of the MAC address of the ingress switch..." Such structure neither describes nor suggests "...encoding the at least one address using a regular expression and using the regular expression in place of at least one address, *wherein the regular expression is selected from a group consisting of concatenation characters and operation characters...*" as recited in the independent claims.

Peacock describes a protocol for locating a server program on a workstation that is dynamically allocated an IP address. An exchange of IP addresses is performed between the client and the server, or alternatively DNS is used, whereby names are used rather than IP addresses. Peacock neither describes nor suggests "...encoding the at least one address using a regular expression and using the regular expression in place of at least one address, *wherein the regular expression is selected from a group consisting of, concatenation characters and operation characters...*" as recited in the claims.

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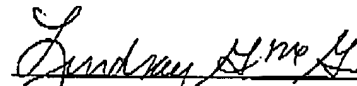
Applicants note that independent claims 1, 8, 15 and 16 have each been amended to further define 'regular expression', and are patentably distinct over the cited references which neither describe nor suggest this limitation either in isolation or combination. Accordingly, for this reason, the independent claims and there dependent claims are patentably distinct over the references, and the rejections should be withdrawn.

Applicants have made a diligent effort to place the claims in condition for allowance. However, should there remain unresolved issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Lindsay G. McGuinness, Applicants' Attorney at 978-264-6664 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

For these reasons, and in view of the above amendments, this application is now considered to be in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Date


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CLAIMS

1. (Previously amended) A method for representing addressing information in a communication system, the method comprising the steps of:

apportioning at least one address into a first portion and a second portion, the first portion selected from a group consisting of a left most portion and a right most portion;

encoding only the first portion at least one address using a regular expression;

and appending the encoded first portion to the second portion to provide a

modified address, and

using the modified address regular expression in place of at least one address,

wherein the regular expression is selected from a group consisting of wildcard characters, concatenation characters and operation characters.

2. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one address comprises at least one X.121 address.

3. (Currently amended) The method of claim 2, wherein using the modified address regular expression in place of the at least one address includes comprising storing the modified address regular expression in a first portion of a source address field of an address configuration table.

4. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one address comprises at least one MAC address.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1-3, wherein using the regular expression in place of a the first portion of the at least one address comprises using the regular expression to specify at least one address of an address pool.

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7. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein using the regular expression in place of a the first portion of the at least one address comprises storing the regular expression in a management information base.

8. (Currently amended) A network device comprising a storage for storing a regular expression representing a first portion of at least one address, wherein the first portion is selected from a group consisting of a right most portion of the at least one address and a left most portion of the at least one address, wherein the regular expression is selected from a group consisting of ~~wildcard characters~~, concatenation characters and operation characters.

9. (original) The network device of claim 8, wherein the storage comprises an address configuration table.

10. (original) The network device of claim 9, wherein the regular expression defines a source address group.

11. (original) The network device of claim 8, wherein the storage comprises a management information base.

12. (original) The network device of claim 11, wherein the regular expression defines an address pool.

13. (original) The network device of claim 8, wherein the storage comprises a routing table.

14. (original) The network device of claim 11, wherein the regular expression defines a forwarding equivalence class for a routing table entry.

15. (Currently amended) An address configuration table for mapping a plurality of source devices in a source network to a single destination device in a destination network, the address configuration table comprising an address configuration table entry storing an address, the

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address comprised of a first portion and a second portion, the first portion selected from a group consisting of the right most portion of the address and the left most portion of the address, wherein the first portion is a regular expression representing a plurality of source device addresses, and wherein the regular expression is selected from a group consisting of wildcard characters, concatenation characters and operation characters.

16. (Currently amended) A management information base comprising a management object for storing a regular expression representing a first portion at least one address, wherein the first portion of the at least one address is selected from a group consisting of a left most portion of the at least one address and a right most portion of the at least one address, and wherein the regular expression is selected from a group consisting of wildcard characters, operation characters and concatenation characters.
